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ABSTRACT

The development, operation, and evaluation of an experimentally based teacher training program, the Mildly Handicapped Program (MHP), is described in this report. The overall concern of the program is to develop teachers who, in the real world public school classroom setting, obtain the best possible results from elementary age children in special and/or regular classroom settings. The MHP program enables students to obtain a B.S. degree in elementary education with (1) major certification in elementary education and (2) special education endorsement in two areas--mental retardation and emotional disturbance/behavior disorders. The MHP is thus a teacher training program designed to prepare teachers to provide educational services to regular class students and to children thought to be mildly handicapped in the exceptional child areas of mental retardation and behavioral disorders. Other goals of the program include preparing teachers to meet the cognitive abilities and affective needs of children from different social areas. In addition to the major objective of preparing teachers who can efficiently teach a wide range of cognitive abilities and behavioral styles, MHP objectives are: (1) to specify the changes in the attitudes, knowledge, and skills of regular educators which would facilitate mainstreaming and responsiveness to the needs of the mildly handicapped children; and (2) to provide a training environment where graduate students of special education can acquire teacher training program development, implementation, and evaluation skills. (MM)

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A Model Program for Training Teachers of the Mildly Handicapped

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The Goals of Teacher Training Programs

It is generally acknowledged that the major purpose of teacher training programs is to produce effective teachers. Most would also agree that an effective teacher is one who interacts with students in such a way that desired learner change results (McNeil & Popham, 1973; Gage & Winne, 1975). However, while we know the purpose of teacher training programs, we have tended not to know the best ways of attempting to realize this purpose. Probably, a major reason why we have not known how to design and manage effective teacher training programs is because of the absence of serious attempts to systematically evaluate them. For example, prior to 1964, little empirical research on teacher education existed. And while research on teacher education began to accumulate between 1964 and 1974, it is still extremely difficult for teacher training programs to identify accurately those aspects of the programs which lead to the development of competent teachers (Peck and Tucker, 1973; Turner, 1975). The basic questions then with respect to teacher training program development appear to be (1) how can teacher training programs effectively develop critical or effective teaching competencies, and (2) how can the validity or impact of the program on trainee and pupil behavior be determined? In short, the goals are (1) how can teacher training programs best go about the business of meeting major objectives, and (2) how can we know whether or not these objectives are being met?

The Dilemma of Determining Teacher Training Program Effectiveness

In terms of the above goals our effectiveness as teacher trainers has been questioned. In the past, teacher training programs have been static rather than dynamic. Once developed, they were seldom modified and tended to remain essentially unchanged over time (Stone, 1968; Cogan, 1975). The traditional approach also precluded the inclusion of programmatic inputs that related to specific student population groups such as educationally deprived children. The general assumption underlying the development of traditional teacher training programs appears to have been that whether regular or special education was the area of concern, each area was composed of a homogeneous student population group which could be effectively taught by means of traditional, pedagogical practice. In recent years such programs designed to train students to become teachers have been the subject of a great deal of criticism (Woodring, 1975). Some of the criticism has focused on the skill with which teachers have been equipped to effectively present instruction (Stone, 1968; Gage & Winne, 1975). Other commentary is concerned with the failure of teacher training programs to prepare teachers to teach effectively certain groups of students. For example, the NDEA National Institute for Advanced Study in Teaching Disadvantaged Youth regards much of the failure of public schools to provide effective instruction to deprived children to be attributable to inadequacies in programs responsible for the training of teachers (Wilkerson, 1968).

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A more general concern for teacher training program inadequacies led the Ford Foundation to invest 29 million dollars in innovative teacher training programs at various universities throughout the U.S. (Stone, 1969). Probably at the heart of this problem is the fact that we don't know a great deal about the actual teaching behaviors of either effective or ineffective teachers (Turner, 1975; Rosenshine & Furst, 1973; Gage & Winne, 1975). Worse, we know less about the effect or impact of effective or ineffective teachers on student achievement. Most of what we know about teaching behavior comes from studies conducted in controlled laboratory-like environments. Very little informative research exists on teaching quality or effectiveness in public school classrooms (Rosenshine & Furst, 1973). And especially lacking in research in teacher education is the systematic evaluation of trainees in teacher training programs (McNeill and Popham, 1973; Turner, 1975). Thus, perhaps the major criticisms of many teacher training programs is their inability to determine effectively what they are doing and why they are doing it. Such an approach precludes attempts at accountability, which, it would seem, is central to effective program development.

Since the evaluation of teacher trainees has been shown to be lacking (McNeill & Popham, 1973), teacher training program directors have had little information which could be used to specify (1) trainee selection criteria, (2) which program inputs would modify trainees' teaching behavior in the desired direction, and (3) trainee exit competencies attained as a function of successfully completing the training program. Similarly, the evaluation of trainees during the period of student teaching has largely been subjective or impressionistic (Sorenson, 1967; Marks, Stoops & King-Stoops, 1971). Impressionistic or high inference evaluation methods have resulted in the establishment of predictor variables in student teaching assessment which have little or no relationship to future tasks about which predictions were being made. Using this type of evaluation, student teachers were often determined to have high potential as successful teachers on the basis of such attributes as neatness, deportment, friendliness and cheerfulness (McNeill & Popham, 1973).

In sum, the indication seems to be that determining the efficacy of specific training components within teacher education programs has been difficult. In the same vein, the question of the validity of a teacher training program, that is, the effect a program has on teachers in terms of learner gains revealed by students of those teachers, could not adequately be determined. Interestingly, the issues we were unable to resolve in the past are specifically the issues around which questions of teacher training program effectiveness largely revolve: efficacy and validity. When these questions are posed, we are in fact asking: (1) does the program meet its objectives in providing its trainees with a specified set of teaching competencies, and (2) does the possession of these competencies have any impact on the students of the teachers trained? It is only recently that teacher education has begun to address these issues.

Change

For the last few years a strong response to the need for change has been evident in teacher training program development activities. Many such programs today may be characterized as dynamic. Many are training teachers to meet the educational needs of specific student population groups (Peck & Tucker, 1973; Stone, 1969). Many of the recent teacher training programs are basically

experimental. That is, at the same time that these programs are attempting to train competent teachers, they are also, through the use of objective research methodology, attempting to determine what a good teacher is in terms of educational impact, and what kinds of programmatic inputs are most effective in developing such teachers. Such approaches relate directly to the efficacy and validity questions discussed earlier.

Overall, the assessment picture of training programs and that of the products of training programs--trainees--is changing. Greater objective study is being given to all aspects of teacher training programs from initial teacher role specification to actual in-service role performance (Peck & Tucker, 1973). Many past subjective evaluation practices of teacher performance are being replaced by other approaches such as computer assisted teaching and evaluation systems, videotaped microteaching assignments, systematic observation instruments, and the use of sophisticated interaction analysis techniques. The program which will be described in this paper, the Undergraduate Program to train Teachers of the Mildly Handicapped (MHP), reflects the change occurring in the development of teacher training programs today. Accordingly, the purpose of this paper is to present a comprehensive description of an experimental approach to training students to provide educational services to elementary level non-handicapped and mildly handicapped children in both regular and special class settings. This experimental approach represents a direct response to the need for innovation in teacher training programs.

The Mildly Handicapped Program

The Mildly Handicapped Program is an experimentally based undergraduate teacher education program which prepares teachers to fulfill teaching roles in regular and/or special education. This program enables students to obtain a Bachelor of Science degree in elementary education. Accompanying the BS degree is major certification (1) in elementary education and (2) special education endorsement in two areas: mental retardation and emotional disturbance/behavior disorders. The MHP is thus a teacher training program designed to prepare teachers to provide educational services to regular class students (i.e., students whose educational needs are presumed not to require specialized services), and to children thought to be mildly handicapped (in terms of degree of severity) in the exceptional child areas of mental retardation and behavioral disorders.

Given the impetus of mainstreaming (i.e., the attempt to educate as many children as possible within the educational mainstream and the focus on the integration and re-entry of mildly retarded, emotionally disturbed, and learning disabled children into regular classroom settings), normal or "traditional" classrooms will increasingly be integrated with exceptional children within the near future. MHP graduates are uniquely prepared for this development since they are trained and certified in both regular and special education. The training in elementary education provides the teacher with a sound grounding in subject skills, but does not give training in the teaching of children who do not fall into the traditional or normal range of behavioral styles and/or academic performance in the classroom. The additional special education coursework provided by the MHP which qualifies the student for the double endorsement in special education widens the effectiveness range of the classroom teacher in programming for children with learning and/or behavior problems. Thus the MHP graduate possesses the skills which enable him/her to provide instruction to a wide range of cognitive abilities and behavioral styles.

MHP Selection and Application Process

The MHP is available only to students who have been admitted to the program by the MHP admissions committee. Application for admission to the MHP must be made during the student's sophomore year and returned to the Department of Special Education by March 1 of that school year.

Students interested in becoming members of the MHP are required to submit an application for admission. A major part of the student's application is the goal statement section. Here, it is important that the student expresses the desire to provide instruction to mildly handicapped and/or educationally deprived children in addition to typical regular class elementary children. Intent, or the desire, to teach a broad range of children without regard for type of exceptional child handicap, ethnic, or social status membership is one indication of adequate motivation for the teaching role for which the student will be prepared. Application criteria also focus on (1) records indicating prior academic achievement in university coursework during the student's first two years, (2) tutorial, summer camp and/or other previous work with mildly handicapped children and/or handicapped, and (3) letters of recommendation from individuals who supervised, directed or systematically observed the applicant's previous work with children.

Present MHP selection criteria include (1) evidence of scholastic ability (2.5 GPA or above), (2) evidence of successful teaching and/or recreational experiences with mildly handicapped and/or nonhandicapped children (three letters of recommendation from persons able to make substantive statements about the quality of the work experience the applicant had with the children); and (3) evidence of adequate social interaction skills and interest in working with mildly handicapped children (determined through personal interview).

Currently, for the 1975-76 academic year 31 seniors and 43 juniors are enrolled in the MHP. It is anticipated that future classes of MHP trainees will number about 50 junior and senior level trainees each year.

Training Needs Addressed by the MHP

A developing policy in American education is the attempt to meet the educational needs of as many children labeled mildly handicapped as possible in the regular classroom. This developing policy is mainstreaming and it reflects the view that the educational welfare of all children is best assured when their formal schooling occurs in an integrated, regular class setting (Berry, 1974; Bradfield et al., 1973; Hafner, 1972; Kaufman et al., 1974, 1975; Kreinberg & Chow, 1974).

The fact that mainstreaming programs are currently underway in many Indiana communities and that others are currently in the developmental stage indicates a present and future need for teachers in the state who are trained to maintain effective mainstreamed classrooms. This need becomes greater given the realization that mainstreaming is currently a national phenomenon in American education.

To mainstream effectively students previously labeled mildly handicapped (i.e., educable mentally retarded, emotionally disturbed, learning disabled) or to prevent the future special class placement of those children whose educational needs can better be met in regular classrooms, a critical need exists to reconceptualize the traditional role of the regular class elementary teacher, and to train future teachers accordingly. That is, the inclusion of

children who tend to show a greater than normal range of cognitive functioning problems and/or greater variance in behavioral style and disorders suggests that the teacher best prepared to provide instruction in a mainstreamed classroom is one who possesses a broader and more specialized array of generic and individualized teaching skills than is usually obtained from a traditional, regular, elementary education teacher training program.

More specifically, a need exists today to prepare regular elementary teachers in a way that includes major inputs from both regular and special education programs in order to meet the educational needs of diverse pupil groups in the regular elementary classroom environment.

In addition to training teachers for mainstreaming roles, a need also exists in the state to continue training teachers to meet the individual needs of children who, for example, upon application of Indiana's least restrictive alternative clause under state law Mandatory Rule S-1, will receive special class placements. Presently the state of Indiana needs about 1,342 teachers of the emotionally disturbed/behavior disordered and 825 teachers of the educable mentally retarded. Thus the MHP serves basic needs in the state which exist in both regular and special education programs.

MHP Objectives

The consistent, basic objective of the MHP is to prepare efficiently teachers who can effectively provide direct instruction to (1) normal elementary students, (2) mainstreamed mildly handicapped students, and (3) mildly handicapped students in special classes. The program goals also include preparing teachers to teach children from different social areas (i.e., urban-inner city, suburban, depressed rural). Additionally, it is hoped that the MHP graduate will be prepared to meet the cognitive and affective needs of poor and/or nonwhite children.

The second major objective of the MHP is to assess, coordinate and integrate specific MHP training components (i.e., courses, practica, modules) to the extent that the MHP is a refined, performance-based teacher training program. That is, the MHP will be able to specify competencies needed by trainees to provide effective educational services to mildly handicapped children. Similarly, the MHP will provide and evaluate learning experiences through which trainees can acquire these competencies.

Additional major objectives of the MHP are to specify the changes in the attitudes, knowledge, and skills of regular education personnel which would facilitate effective mainstreaming and responsiveness to the educational needs of mildly handicapped children; to develop specific training strategies and procedures for implementation within the School of Education at Indiana University which might facilitate such changes; and to involve LEA personnel, representatives of the office of the Dean in the School of Education, the School of Education faculty, parents, and representatives in regular and special education from the Indiana State Department of Public Instruction in the development of a synergistic relationship which focuses on developing a broader and more relevant base for program design, implementation, and evaluation.

Another objective of the MHP is to provide the training environment within which graduate students in the department of special education can acquire teacher training program development, implementation and evaluation skills.

In terms of this objective, the MHP serves as a relevant adjunct to the Department of Special Education graduate programs.

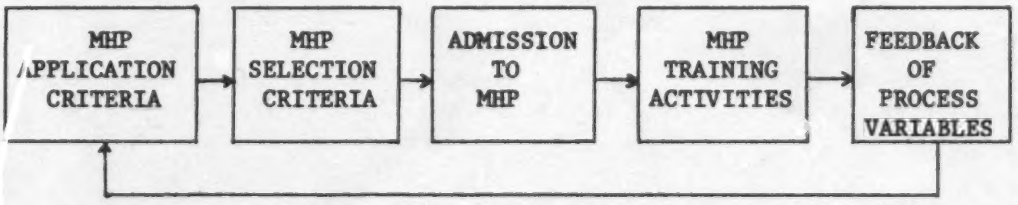
MHP Training Program Model

A seemingly major problem in attempting effective program development in teacher education has been the lack of (1) operational definitions of program goals, (2) statements of measurable objectives which relate to the program's goals, and (3) precise statements which concern methodology, (i.e., what teaching style, what content and what other instructional variables will be used so that learner change will occur as specified by program objectives). For instance, evidence exists which tends to indicate that teacher training programs that are most effective in meeting their objectives are those which are designed in such a way that the goals can be operationally defined and behaviorally stated (Peck & Tucker, 1973). Accordingly, the MHP is based on an information-systems or a systems analysis approach (Banathy, 1973; White, 1971) which is described below.

Description of the MHP Systems Approach Model

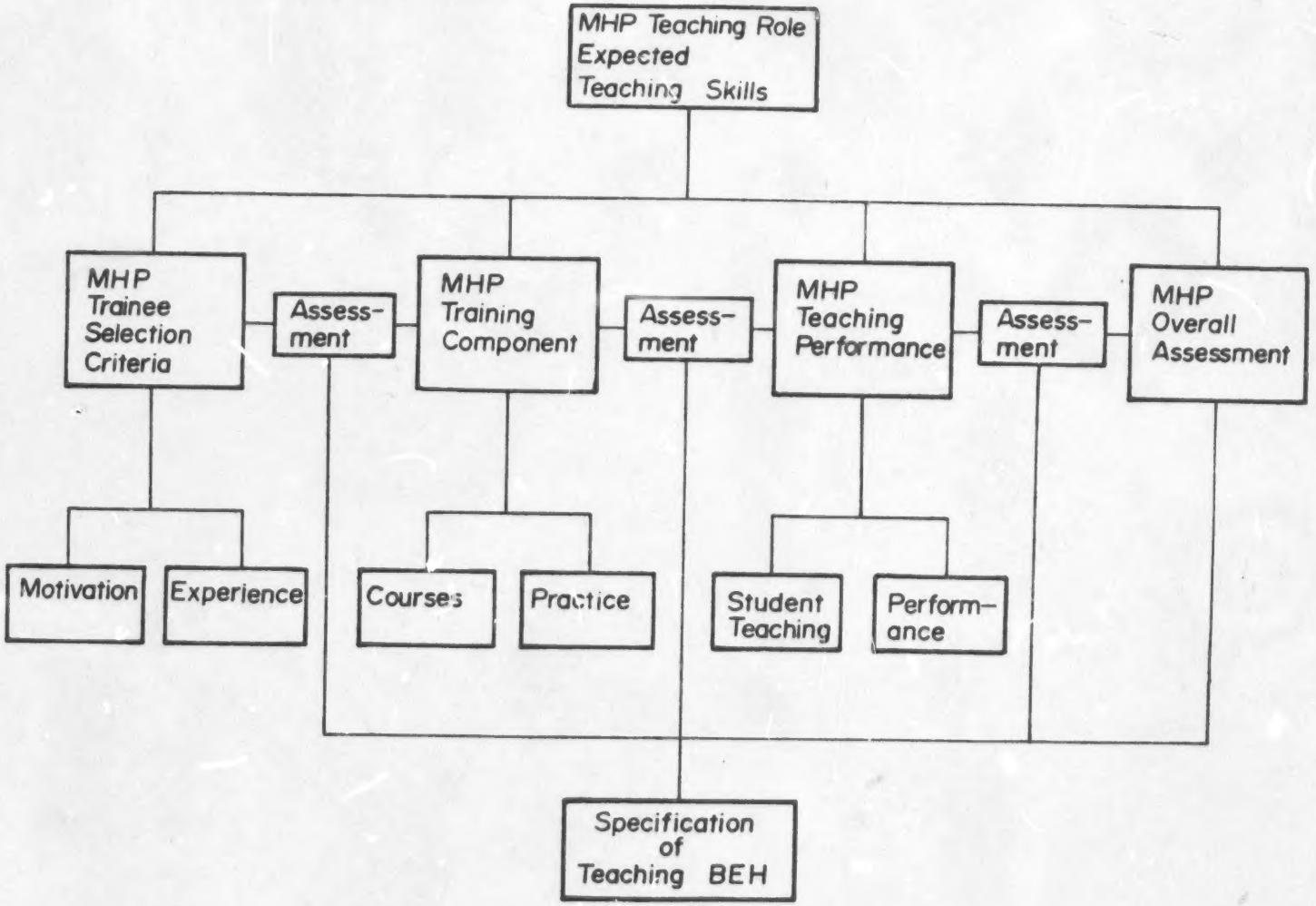
According to the MHP model the initial concern of a teacher training program is role definition: what should a teacher, upon completion of the training program, be able to do? In this regard, the objectives of the MHP focus on (a) MHP graduates who will be able to teach non-handicapped elementary-aged children or mentally retarded or emotionally disturbed whose problems in terms of degree of severity range from mild to moderate; (b) within what administrative arrangements they can then be expected to teach (regular and/or special elementary classrooms); and (c) for which special groups of children additional programmatic input will be provided (the educationally deprived, i.e., children from depressed urban and rural areas).

Based on MHP trainee terminal skills (program objectives) the second concern has to do with the manner in which trainees will be selected for the MHP. In this regard, the question centers on what criteria will be used to select MHP trainees. This process is shown in the flow chart below:



Application Criteria

A major part of the student's application is the goal(s) statement section. As indicated previously, application criteria also focus on (1) academic records, (2) tutorial, summer camp and/or other work with mildly handicapped or other children, and (3) letters of recommendation. In all instances, the focus is on those aspects of the student's previous experiences, interests or scholastic achievement which might predict success teaching non-handicapped and mildly handicapped children.


MHP Teaching Role Expected Teaching Skills
MHP Trainee Selection Criteria
Assess-ment
MHP Training Component
Assess-ment
MHP Teaching Performance
Assess-ment
MHP Overall Assessment
Motivation
Experience
Courses
Practice
Student Teaching
Perform-ance
Specification of Teaching BEH

Selection Criteria

A need exists to develop reliable criteria which when applied to MHP applicants will provide a valid basis for making selections. The problem lies in the fact that initial criteria are often the "best guesses" of program developers about what particular attributes applicants to a training program should possess. However, as more and more students enter and complete a training program and enter the teaching field, formative and summative evaluation procedures should provide a more reliable means for determining the validity of the previously established criteria, and/or the need to establish new criteria which seem to have some validity in predicting teacher effectiveness. Thus, while selection criteria should exist at the time a training program selects its first group of trainees, a critical need exists to evaluate and/or alter previous criteria.

Probably one of the major shortcomings of the current criteria is the lack of a criterion which assesses the attitudes of MHP applicants. This is felt to be important because the students will be working with children who may be exceptional in terms of cognitive functioning or behavioral style, who may be racially or culturally different, and who may also be economically disadvantaged.

In other words, it seems reasonable that a program training teachers to teach normal, mildly handicapped and/or educationally deprived children should in its selection criteria address the issue of the attitudes of the trainee with respect to the group of students s/he will probably later teach

Teacher Performance Specification

The MHP is committed to the notion that within the overall training component, the trainees should acquire a specific set of teaching competencies. These competencies refer to observable skills to be acquired which should maximize trainee effectiveness with mildly handicapped children. These competencies also refer to specific information or knowledge about exceptionality and educational programming for mildly handicapped and normal children which MHP trainees should be able to demonstrate upon completion of the program or specific courses in the program. Accordingly, the academic coursework and practica which make up the training component of the MHP can be broken into three groups: (1) instructional offerings that are primarily designed to provide the trainees with the necessary information or content base (knowledge/theory), (2) instructional offerings concerned with skill acquisition, and (3) instructional offerings which provide a combination of knowledge/theory and skill acquisition (theoretical-applied). From this perspective, MHP academic coursework and practice may be grouped and described as shown on the following page.

From the MHP academic coursework and practice grouping on page 9, program trainees should acquire a functional set of instructional and management competencies. A partial list of these competencies is on page 10. Abbreviated course titles are appended to each competency statement indicating the program component in which it is expected that the competency will be acquired.

MHP INSTRUCTIONAL OFFERINGS
GROUPED ACCORDING TO FUNCTION

Knowledge/Theory

K205 Introduction to Exceptional Children

K343 Education of the Socially and Emotionally Disturbed I

K350 Introduction to Mental Retardation

P280 Human Development and Learning Applied to Teaching

E339 Methods of Teaching Language Arts and Reading I

K500 Research on Academic Performance Problems of Educationally Deprived Children

Skill Acquisition

K344 Education of the Socially and Emotionally Disturbed III

K380 Curriculum and Methods for Teaching of the Educable Mentally Retarded

K495 Pre-Student Teaching Practicum

K488 Student Teaching (Special Education)

K488 Student Teaching (Regular, Elementary Education)

Theoretical/Applied

K500 Systematic Observation, Assessment and Evaluation Techniques

K495 Instructional Design Techniques and Teacher Education Laboratory Practicum

E340 Methods of Teaching Language Arts and Reading II

E341 Methods of Teaching Language Arts and Reading III

E325 Social Studies in the Elementary Schools (Methods)

E328 Science in the Elementary Schools (Methods)

E343 Mathematics in the Elementary Schools (Methods)

M323 The Teaching of Music in the Elementary Schools (Methods)

M333 Art Experiences for the Elementary Teacher (Methods)

Sources of Competency Acquisition in the MHP

From each instructional offering within the MHP, it is expected that the trainees will acquire exit skills (competencies). These exit skills may be classified according to whether they are theoretical or informational (knowledge), or whether they involve learning to do something (skill or function). Accordingly, using the knowledge--skill/function distinction many of the MHP exit skills will be presented below:

Knowledge

MHP trainees will be able to:

K500

Discriminate among specific observational approaches to classroom assessment, intervention and evaluation.

Describe several types of teaching styles.

Interpret criterion referenced and informal diagnostic tests.

K343

List major characteristics of behaviorally disordered children.

List and describe the dominant theories which form the philosophical base for educational programs for behaviorally disordered children.

Discuss major features in the developmental history of the field of emotional disturbance/behavioral disorders.

K350

List and discuss the major classification systems in the field of mental retardation.

Discuss research findings on learning characteristics and psychosocial characteristics of children labeled mentally retarded.

List and critically analyze the effectiveness of curricular interventions on academic performance.

Describe motor, language, and speech developmental stages.

Discuss teaching strategies most effective with children labeled mentally retarded according to degree of severity of handicap.

K380

List contemporary goals for educational programs for primary level mildly retarded children.

Explain class grouping principles utilizing Mental Age, Chronological Age, Academic Achievement level and Social Development.

E339

Discriminate among specific approaches for teaching reading.

E323

Explain the experimental method of science.

M333

Discuss art curriculum development in the elementary school.

E325

List and discuss the objectives of an elementary level social studies curriculum.

Function

MHP trainees will be able to:

E325

Assess varying abilities and learning styles of children and plan lessons based on this assessment.

Organize and implement committee work tasks for elementary level classrooms.

E343

Select content in mathematics for different grade levels in a way consistent with recent child development and learning research findings.

Select a variety of instructional materials in order to provide positive learning experiences in mathematics for children.

E339, E340, E341

Demonstrate ability to organize an effective learning environment with respect to stated reading/language arts objectives.

List a variety of children's books and discuss their appropriateness for use with a child or children in relation to reading and language arts objectives.

Utilize or construct informal reading diagnostic tests.

K500

Select an appropriate observation system for a specified problem.

Collect baseline and treatment data of verbal teacher-pupil interactions.

Develop personal observation instruments.

K495

Utilize and/or construct diagnostic teaching lessons that encompass specific learning objectives and task analysis skills.

Construct pre- and post-tests to accompany self prepared instructional materials.

K380

Design flexible learning environments which reflect maximum use of space and resources.

Select educational materials which match the interest and ability levels of children.

Construct related curricular materials.

E323

Teach a science lesson using performance objectives (E323) and previously stated learning strategies (E323).

Assessing Competencies Acquired

To determine if the stated exit skills of MHP academic courses and practica have been acquired, MHP trainees are assessed as follows: If the exit skills fall within the KNOWLEDGE area, trainees usually demonstrate competency by successfully completing an examination (paper and pencil) in which the concern is usually to state, describe or explain some phenomenon relating to or about exceptional or normal children within a previously established criterion level. If the exit skill falls within the FUNCTION area, trainees usually demonstrate competency by successfully completing a written or performance examination or situation in which the concern is usually to construct, administer, evaluate, develop, design, or teach according to objectives previously stated, within a criterion level previously established.

The MHP is presently in the process of establishing clear (1) course objectives for every MHP instructional offering, (2) exit competencies trainees are expected to possess upon completion of specific courses and practica, and (3) criterion levels for each instructional offering which, when met, will denote competency acquisition.

Once the above concerns are resolved, the MHP will attempt to comprehensively assess the entering behaviors of incoming trainees with respect to knowledge, skill, and attitude. The question of concern here with respect to MHP objectives is, to what extent do incoming students possess the necessary skills to those objectives? A related evaluation concern is to ask: With respect to the skills MHP trainees are expected to possess upon completion of the program, is the process of skill attainment by the trainees primarily a function of training or student selection? A second question of concern has

to do with the general effect or impact of the teaching skills acquired in the MHP on the learning behavior of children as seen in student teaching and later, in actual on-the-job teaching situations. The answer to the first question posed above will come from evaluation of MHP application and trainee selection criteria and skills obtained from the training program. Answers to the second question will evolve from later longitudinal type evaluations of actively teaching MHP graduates. Efforts to study these issues are presently being initiated by the MHP. It is expected that preliminary reports on all issues discussed here will be forthcoming in the near future.

The MHP Practicum Sequence

Within the MHP three training environments exist which provide, sequentially, the applied learning experiences necessary for program trainees to acquire specific skill competencies necessary to teach mildly handicapped and normal children. The three types of training environments are Simulated, Controlled Laboratory, and the Natural Classroom. MHP trainees spend a considerable amount of program training time in all three training environments during their first three semesters in the MHP. A major and unique practicum facility in the program which contains the first two training environments is the Teacher Education Laboratory (TEL) of the Center for Innovation in Teaching the Handicapped (CITH). CITH is a federally funded research and development facility. Its focus is on the design, development, and systematic evaluation of instructional materials and teacher-training methodology for teacher trainers and preservice and in-service teachers of mildly handicapped children. The TEL of CITH incorporates a Computer Assisted Teacher Training System (CATTS) which provides teacher trainees with instantaneous, after-session immediate and delayed analyses, and feedback as well as data summaries of classroom teacher-pupil interactions. The comprehensive CATTS system is designed to produce a feasible, cost-effective means of systematic observation, real-time analysis, storage and feedback of specific observation-coding data relevant to classroom teacher-pupil interactions. Trainees are provided with a variety of types and modes (e.g., CRT, scope, video, hard-copy, printout, immediate, delayed, etc.) of feedback and summaries relevant to their teaching performance with handicapped children both during and after tutorial training sessions. Hence with the aid of CATTS, the trainees may learn in controlled laboratory settings to discriminate, generate and evaluate specific cognitive, affective, linguistic and psycho-motor teaching behaviors, patterns and environments deemed essential to the MHP training program. As a practicum setting, TEL further provides trainees with an opportunity to learn and utilize a variety of observation-coding systems and self-instructional teacher training packages which are being developed at CITH. The MHP uses a heuristic training model developed by Semmel (1975) to guide the development of competencies in the K500 Teacher Education Laboratory practicum component. The reader is referred to previous and current work by Sitko, et al., (1974, 1976) for comprehensive descriptions of the use of CATTS and the critical role of CITH in the MHP.

The Indiana University Developmental Training Center (DTC) is an interdisciplinary facility concerned with developing effective educational/management strategies for children having a variety of handicapping conditions. To meet its objective, the DTC maintains an assessment program, a short-term residential program, and cooperative day school programs involving handicapped children. These programs--as clinical-type practicum sites--provide MHP trainees with the learning-working environment within which skills can be acquired in these areas:

The assessment of learner/behavioral needs

The formulation of appropriate instructional goals

The development and/or use of appropriate methodologies (i.e., teaching strategies, curricular approaches, behavioral interventions)

The evaluation of the methodology(s) implemented with respect to instructional goals formulated

The DTC is used as a practicum site within which academic and behavioral assessment skills may be acquired.

Practicum Sites

To achieve competency in the diagnostic teaching skill area, the trainees participate in diagnostic and prescriptive teaching activities in an individualized tutoring relationship with EMR-ED children in a demonstration class at the DTC, with learning disabled children in a reading tutorial program of CITH, and with regular children in the local community schools. To achieve competency in the administrative and management area, the students engage in practica that use role playing and other simulation activities and workshops as well as individual and group contact with handicapped or regular children in the community. The third training environment is practicum experience obtained under supervision in public school classrooms. During the 1973-74 academic period, practicum sites were either established or available in all the major school districts including and adjacent to those in Monroe County. Additional practicum sites were added in 1974-75 and during the present school year, practicum sites were developed in the Indianapolis area.

MHP Student Teaching

Student teaching is the terminal component of the training program. The purpose of this experience is (1) to provide an appropriate setting for the application of previously acquired teaching skills, (2) to present the MHP trainees with a valid teaching role-model for an extended period of time, and (3) to allow for the integration or synthesis of discrete teaching skills. All prior MHP coursework must be completed before a trainee receives a student teaching assignment.

MHP trainees receive two student teaching assignments of eight weeks each. One is a regular class elementary education student teaching assignment; the second occurs within a special class setting at the elementary school level. These two experiences (regular and special class) may be completed in order of preference of the trainee. For the special class student teaching assignment, the student chooses either the mental retardation or emotional disturbance/behavioral disorder category. This decision is necessary because although the MHP training component provides academic coursework and practica in both exceptional child areas, the pre-service teaching component provides for a student teaching experience in only one exceptional child area. Related to this is the fact that prospective employers generally desire that a recent graduate of a teacher training program have student taught in the area for which s/he seeks employment. Consequently, it is important that the trainees decide which area

is of major professional interest to them and elect to student teach in that area. At present, the inability to provide all MHP trainees with student teaching experiences in both special education endorsement areas is viewed as a serious program need.

Upon completion of both regular and special education student teaching assignments, the trainee has essentially met all MHP requirements and is presumably prepared to deliver direct and indirect services to non-handicapped and mildly handicapped children in a variety of settings and learning environments.

MHP Evaluation

A key feature of the MHP is its evaluation component. Utilizing a systems approach to program development, the role of MHP evaluation may be viewed as a formative evaluation unit of each component in the MHP. It may also be viewed as a distinct program summative evaluation component.

The role of evaluation in the MHP is consistent with the discussion presented in the introduction of this paper on the need to show a greater concern for and to use more objective means of determining the effectiveness and validity of a teacher training program. The basic questions of research concern to the MHP have not changed since the program was conceived.

1. Do trainees demonstrate acquisition and gains in specified knowledge, skill and attitude competencies as a function of participation in the MHP? (Efficacy Evaluation)

2. Do trainees maintain in naturalistic teaching settings and utilize competencies that have been attained? (Validity Evaluation)

3. What is the impact of teacher competencies on pupil behavior? (Validity Evaluation)

In sum, these questions ask (1) does the MHP provide the trainees with critical teaching skills deemed important and (2) if it does, what is the effect or impact of possessing these skills in terms of the ability to provide direct instruction to children?

Determining whether the trainees possess the desired competencies is a function of the efficacy summative evaluation component of the training program. On the micro-level, it is a function of the formative evaluation subcomponent of the formal learning experiences in the MHP. Successful completion of an academic course or practicum experience may be regarded as evidence that the trainee possesses the particular skills for which the course or practicum was designed and instituted. However, determining competency possession may be an initial program evaluation question. Intermediate level questions focus on what happens to these skills in pre- and in-service teaching situations. Given that MHP trainees do acquire specified competencies as a function of training program participation, do these competencies maintain and transfer to other specific teaching-learning settings; if they transfer, are they maintained in the new settings? The intermediate level evaluation questions then focus on the transfer and maintenance effects of specific teaching competencies acquired in the MHP. With respect to these questions, a pilot research investigation is in progress and a preliminary report is forthcoming.

If MHP trainees do acquire specific teaching competencies, and if these competencies do transfer and are maintained in different teacher-learning settings, then the next level of MHP research concern will be the terminal level. At this level the question is what is the effect of the acquisition and possession of specific teaching competencies on the learner behavior of children taught? At the present MHP developmental stage, research is focusing on the initial and intermediate questions. The terminal level question will be investigated by means of longitudinal, follow-up study of MHP graduates for which a proposal is presently being prepared.

The research concerns described above may be regarded as major MHP evaluation concerns. They relate directly to the important need to determine the efficacy and validity of any teacher training program. Additional research concerns focus on MHP needs and, in terms of a systems approach, may be seen as representing a process of continuous MHP evaluation and feedback. This process is concerned with each component of the MHP and will be discussed accordingly.

Teacher Role--MHP Perspective

All program activities stem from a conceptualization of the particular role the persons trained will be expected to assume later as teachers in special or regular classroom settings. Given this role, the questions of research interest for each MHP component are as follows:

1. MHP TRAINEE SELECTION COMPONENT: What are the most relevant criteria for the MHP to use to select those students with the highest probability of successfully assuming the specified MHP teaching role?

2. MHP TRAINING COMPONENT: With respect to the academic coursework and practica, and the trainee need to acquire specific competencies:

    a. Are relevant, effective learning experiences provided?
    b. Is there a need for additional academic courses or practica?
    c. Are exit competencies specified for all MHP instructional offerings?
    d. Do areas of redundancy exist with respect to goals, content, learning experiences, or exit competencies among the MHP instructional offerings?

3. MHP PRE-SERVICE TEACHER PERFORMANCE: Are the exit competencies of major concern accessible to systematic observation during the period of student teaching?

    a. According to the specified MHP teacher role, is the MHP achieving the goal of providing MHP trainees with the desired skills?

    b. As studied by systematic observation technique:

        (1) What specific teaching skills tend to represent MHP trainee strength areas?

(2) What specific teaching skills tend to represent MHP trainee deficiencies?

A systematic investigation focusing on both process and product variables should allow the MHP to do a far better job of selecting trainees and of determining the appropriate MHP curriculum. Additional research on pre- and in-service teacher performance should generate relevant commentary of the overall effectiveness and validity of the MHP in meeting its specified teacher preparation goal.

A program needs assessment conducted during the 1974-75 school year indicated the need for two additional practicum experiences. The first is a practicum designed to enable MHP trainees to observe systematically a variety of teaching styles to attempt to relate teaching style to students taught, lesson content, and instructional goals. This additional practicum takes place in the Monroe County Community School Corporation in Bloomington and Monroe County. The second perceived need comes from an awareness that prior to student teaching MHP trainees have traditionally gone through a practicum sequence which afforded opportunity to interact with only a single student or with small groups of students. In the past trainees have not had the opportunity to provide instruction to larger groups of students. Similarly, trainees have had little opportunity to assist in providing instruction to poor and/or racially different children in urban areas. This group- and urban-oriented practicum experience has also been added to the MHP and takes place during the third semester in the Indianapolis Public Schools.

An instrument designed to assess the effect of these two practica in modifying the attitudes of MHP trainees toward teaching a variety of settings (i.e., inner city, depressed rural and suburban) was developed through a collaborative effort between the MHP and the Division of Teacher Education Evaluation Team.

Doctoral Level Training

As an experimentally based teacher training program, the MHP offers valuable applied training experiences to all levels of graduate students majoring in Special Education. These experiences which should relate to the professional goals of the graduate student are provided in the form of assistantship and practicum assignments. MHP assistant roles in which the applicant can acquire skills are (1) program administration, (2) instructional development, (3) practicum coordination and supervision, (4) program evaluation, (5) supervision of student teaching, and (6) teacher education research and development. Training in these roles adds to the professional strengths of the graduate student and provides him/her with an orientation to educational program development, implementation and evaluation which may be put to good use, after graduation, in the field.

Conclusion

The foregoing has been an attempt to describe the development, operation, and evaluation of an experimentally based teacher training program. Central to this program is an attempt through systematic research investigation to respond to crucial issues in teacher training program development: the effectiveness of the program in terms of efficacy and validity.

Finally some comment should be made relating the MHP to performance based teacher education programs (PBTE). The MHP is not a performance based program. There is ample justification to state that the MHP presently contains many of the features associated with PBTE, such as goal(s) specification, assessment, the use of instructional objectives to develop instructional content, and strong reliance in exit competencies as a means of determining mastery. Lacking in the MHP presently, however, is the ability to hold achievements constant while varying time, and the ability to specify the objectives and subsequent criterion levels for exit competencies of the MHP and also for each component or instructional offering within the MHP.

PBTE notwithstanding, our overall concern is with the question of how to implement a program that develops teachers who, in the real world public classroom setting, obtain the best possible results from elementary age children in special and/or regular classroom settings.

Composition of the MHP Committee

Many individuals representing several departments and programs within the School of Education have contributed to the development of the MHP. Several, including both faculty and students, were involved in the early conception of this program. The result of this early work was the MHP proposal (Shuster, 1973).

The MHP Committee includes special education faculty (Drs. Albert Fink, Lewis Polsgrove, Susan Shuster, Howard Spicker and Patricia Williams) and the elementary education faculty responsible for teaching methods courses (Dr. James Weigand, Science; Dr. Dorothy Skeel, Social Studies; Dr. Ronald Welch, Mathematics; Dr. Guy Hubbard, Art; Dr. Susan Yank, Music; and Dr. Carolyn Burke, Reading). The Director of Special Education of the local Monroe County Community School Corporation also serves as a member of the MHP Committee. The Indiana State Director of Special Education (State Department of Public Instruction) serves as a consultant to the MHP.

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